

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 were rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-13 of U.S. Pat. 6,583,225 (Plochocka) in view of U.S. Pat. 5,635,568 (Plochocka); and claims 1-5 of U.S. Pat. 6,706,817 (Plochocka) in view of U.S. Pat. 5,635,568; and claims 1-12 of U.S. Pat. 5,635,568 in view of U.S. Pat. 6,583,225 or U.S. Pat. 6,706,817. The Examiner indicated that a timely filed Terminal Disclaimer could be used to overcome these rejections. Accordingly, a suitable terminal disclaimer is enclosed herein. It is noted that the inventor and assignee of these references and this application are the same, namely Plochocka and ISP Investments Inc., respectively. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 also were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) on '568 in view of '225 or '817. The Examiner has alleged that '568 shows a reactive extrusion process using an anhydride polymer and the Plochocka references show the contemplated resins.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-10 on the combination of these cited references.

As discussed above, these references have been overcome by a Terminal Disclaimer. Furthermore, this application is a continuation-in-part of '817 and '225, by the same inventor and assignee as herein. Accordingly, these patents are not believed to be available as references against this application.

With respect to '568, it is seen that its extrusion process involves an acid-base reaction which merely forms a mixed salt powder of the polymer. Accordingly, its process conditions do not materially affect the characteristics of the mixed salt product. In contrast, in this invention, a crosslinking reaction, e.g. with PVOH, takes place with a defined polymer at the surface of a moving belt substrate covered with a non-woven polyester sheet. What is produced thereby is a thin, tacky layer of semi-transparent, strong, slightly rubbery hydrogel on this substrate. The conditions for forming the

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desired tacky product are defined in the specification and, particularly, in the examples, including the feed rate of PVOH and anhydride (Gantrez®) powder; the PVOH/Gantrez® ratio; devolatilization in the final zone; the temperature in the reaction zone; and the effect of the PVOH/Gantrez® ratio on the swelling property of the product. The sensitivity of these parameters on the tackiness of the crosslinked polymer on the substrate differentiates this extrusion process from the prior Plochocka patent.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully believes that the claims as amended define patentable invention and are unobvious in view of the cited art. Reconsideration and early allowance is respectfully solicited.

In the event any issue still remains after this amendment, Examiner Nutter is urged to call applicant's attorney, Dr. Walter Katz, Reg. No. 19,706 to discuss the matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Walter Katz', is written over a horizontal line.

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Encl. – Terminal Disclaimer